

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

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R 171425Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6149

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

UNCLAS CAIRO 11027

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR EG LE SY XF

SUBJECT: CAIRO PRESS ON LEBANON

1. SUMMARY: PRESS COVERAGE ON LEBANON AUGUST 17 STILL PESSIMISTIC AND ANTI-SYRIAN. AHRAM REPORT OF SADAT INTERVIEW WITH IRANIAN NEWS AGENCY ALLEGES HE CALLS FOR RESIGNATION OF FRANJIYA AND SARKIS (SIC). AL-KHULI REPORTS THAT MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO PREVENT PARTITION OF LEBANON AND THAT THERE ARE INTENTIONS TO ESCALATE FIGHTING. SYRIANS REPORTED ASSISTING RIGHTISTS IN DRIVE INTO MOUNTAINS EAST OF BEIRUT WHILE MUTINY TAKES PLACE IN LAA. END SUMMARY.

2. SADAT INTERVIEW WITH IRANIAN NEWS AGENCY. STORY DOES NOT QUOTE SADAT BUT REPORTS HE SAID THAT EGYPT WILL NOT ALLOW PARTITION ALTHOUGH IT WILL CONTINUE ITS POLICY OF NON-INTERFERENCE.

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THERE MAY BE SOME CONFUSION ABOUT HIS CALL FOR RESIGNATION

OF BOTH FRANJIYA AND SARKIS TO BRING CONCERNED PARTIES TO NEGOTIATING TABLE. AKHBAR REPORT OF INTERVIEW HAD PRESIDENT MENTIONING ONLY FRANJIYA BUT AHARAM CONFIRMED TO EMBASSY THAT AGENCY REPORT, AS FILED, CONTAINED SARKIS REFERENCE ALSO. IF SO, THIS OBVIOUSLY NEW DEPARTURE IN EGYPTIAN POLICY. SADAT WENT ON TO CRITICIZE JORDANIANS FOR BACKING SYRIAN LEBANESE POLICY WITH OBJECTIVE OF SEEING PALESTINAINS CRUSHED AND ACCUSED FRANJIYA AND CHAMOUN OF SEEKING PARTITION.

3. AL-KHULI REMARKS. AL REP AL-KHULI TOLD PRESS THAT AL EFFORTS ARE AIMED ABOVE ALL AT PREVENTING PARTITION. ALTHOUGH HE SAID THERE NO REASON FOR PESSIMISM, AL-KHULI CLEARLY PESSIMISTIC IN HIS COMMENTS THAT THERE "OBVIOUSLY INTENTIONS FOR ESCALATING THE FIGHTING IN LEBANON TO VERY DANGEROUS EXTENT," AND THAT OUTSTANDING OBSTACLE TO CEASFIRE IS AWARENESS OF "SOME PARTIES" THAT THEY HAVE NOT YET ACHIEVED THEIR OBJECTIVES. AL-KHULI SAID HE BELIEVED CEASEFIRE COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED IF QUADRIPARITE COMMITTEE MEETS, DIALOGUE STARTED UNDER SUPERVISION OF SARKIS AND 1969 CAIRO ACCORD IMPLEMENTED. HE ALSO REPORTED AS SAYING THAT SERIES OF STATEMENTS BY JOSEPH SISCO, DEAN BROWN AND RABIN "CONFIRM THAT SOLUTION TO LEBANESE CRISIS POSSIBLE ONLY WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF OVERALL MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT." HE DID NOT AMPLIFY ON THIS COMMENT. AL KHULI SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO BEIRUT WITHIN NEXT TWO DAYS.

4. GUMHURRIYA ITEM, FROM NEWS AGENCIES IN BEIRUT, REPORTED LEBANESE PARTITION WILL BE ANNOUNCED SEPTEMBER 23, DATE FRANKIYA'S TERM EXPIRES.

5. PRESS ALSO REPORTS STATEMENT BY KUWAIT FONMIN THAT CONTACTS TO BRING ABOUT "ARAB SUMMIT" ON LEBANON HAVE ALREADY BEGUN. GUMHIRRIYA EDITORIAL RECOMMENDED THAT URGENTLY NEEDED ARAB SUMMIT BE HELD NOW IN COLOMBO WHILE ARAB HEADS OF STATE GATHERED TOGETHER.

6. AHARAM BANNER HEADLINE PROCLAIMED THAT ISOLATIONISTS REJECT CEASFIRE AND PAPERS REPORT THAT SYRIANS ASSISTING RIGHTIST FORCES IN THEIR DRIVE INTO MOUNTAINS. SYRIAN AIM STILL SAID TO BE PARTITION

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IN SAME FASHION AS TURKISH DIVISION OF CYPRUS.

7. IN CAIRO, PALESTINIAN STUDENTS STAGED FIVE-HOUR SIT-IN STRIKE AT ARAB LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS IN PROTEST AGAINST TEL ZA'TAR. STRIKE ENDED WHEN STUDENTS MET WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS AL-FARRA AND PRESENTED HIM WITH PETITION CALLING FOR "END TO SYRIAN CRIMINAL INTERVENTION."

8. AKHBAR EDITORIAL ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE BEFORE NON-ALLIGNED
SUMMIT NOTED "STRANGE CONTRADICTION" IN ASAD PARTICIPATION
IN DISCUSSION OF PALESTINIAN QUESTION "WHILE HIS HANDS
ARE STILL STAINED WITH PALESTINIAN BLOOD."
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